Rhode Island Department of Education Office for Diverse Learners

School Support System Report and Support Plan for the Cranston ARC
Cornerstone School
March 3, 2009

SCHOOL SUPPORT SYSTEM A Collaborative System of Focused Monitoring

Introduction

The purpose of the School Support System (SSS) is to provide a means of accountability for delivery of programs and services for students with exceptionalities. The School Support System model is designed to promote the involvement of the whole school district, general educators as well as special educators and parents. It is designed to learn if the district meets the regulations and what effects programs and services have on student outcomes. Finally, the SSS develops a school support plan for training and technical assistance.

To accomplish this the SSS includes these components:

- <u>The Orientation Meeting</u> The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) staff meets with the Local Education Agency (LEA) to plan the site review and identify issues or initiatives that may influence programs or service delivery.
- <u>Data Analysis Meeting</u> The RIDE staff meets to review LEA demographic information on selected reports including: the LEA annual plan, census information, and information collected through record review, staff questionnaires and parent interviews. To ensure that the child is at the center of the study, all analyses begin with the child. Thus, a sample of approximately 30 students with exceptionalities is selected; the records of these students are reviewed; their parents, teachers and related service providers are interviewed, and their classrooms are observed. The result is an in-depth, unified examination of the actual provision of programs and services for students with exceptionalities. The RIDE staff compiles a preliminary summary of their analyses of this data.
- Presentation by the LEA and School Site Review The on-site review begins with a presentation of programs by teachers and staff. The presentation provides the review team with general and specific information on delivery of programs and services to students. Following this presentation, on-site reviews to all schools are made. The team members interview school administrators and teaching staff. Parents and central office staff are also interviewed. The team gathers sufficient information and works with the LEA personnel to generate a report, covering the following:
- The district's compliance with the state and federal regulations, relative to the education of students with exceptionalities.
- The quality and effectiveness of programs and services provided by the district.
- The need for professional development and technical assistance that will enable the LEA to improve programs and services.
- <u>The Support Plan</u> The RIDE team, LEA central office and building administrators meet to review the data and complete a report of results. The group designs a professional development/technical assistance support plan with timelines for implementation. This plan enables the school and district to correct areas of non-compliance and to strengthen promising programs and correct areas of weakness in order to improve services and programs for all students.
- The SSS Report The report summarizes the findings from the various data sources. The format of the report uses four divisions: Indicators, Findings, Documentation, and Support Plan. Indicators describe either performance or compliance. Findings can include a variety of some six categories, from School Improvement to Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment. The documentation section of the report distinguishes the source of the finding. The support plan reflects the response to the described findings. The support plan describes the corrective action required by the district as well as resources and time lines to improve programs and services.

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Cornerstone School School Support System Review March 3, 2009

Team: Jane Keane and Anthony Caetano

1. SCHOOL II	MPR(OVEMENT / FAMILY ENGAGEMENT			
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
	1		Document Presentation Faculty Interviews	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
		Adult Services Include Residential			

Performance 2	Vocational and Day Services Greenhouse Supported Employment Seniors Recreational Obtaining Services Cornerstone Children's Network Cornerstone School Transition Services PASS HBTS Respite Services Micro Business Enterprise Better Shred The School Support System Focused Monitoring review will address the Cornerstone School of the Cranston ARC. The Cornerstone School is a private special education school offering a continuum of educational and therapeutic services to student's ages 18 months to 21 years of age in a small nurturing setting state-wide. Faculty shares the responsibility of monitoring the entire educational and health progress of each child. (Seven of the teaching faculty are certified with two teachers currently emergency certified and working towards their full certification.) Vision "At Cornerstone School the emphasis is on ability and not disability. We believe that all children need opportunities to experience the joys of learning."	Document Presentation Faculty and Parent Interviews Student and classroom observations		
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		The development of the Cornerstone School Improvement Plan is based on a staff survey identifying areas of concerns and or suggested ideas for the development of a school based plan for the 2008 – 2009 school goals. The Cornerstone School Improvement Plan addresses five specific goals with targeted projects and program development. Each goal is additionally supported by an estimated project budget. The School Improvement Goals are as follows: Building & Grounds Playground Services Day Care / After School Public Relations Examples of projects include a new school sign, building a Sensory Garden, hosting trainings and workshops, expanding day care and creating an open house.			
Performance	3	Professional Development Cornerstone School has clear policies and practices for faculty to engage in professional development including four professional development days, a tuition assistance program along with job embedded professional development opportunities. Examples of professional development offered include but are not limited to: • Fire Safety and lockdown • HIPPA • TBI • IEP • Fundamentals of Behavior Management • Sensory Kit Workshop • Alternate Assessment • CPR • Health Care Orientation	Document Presentation Faculty Interviews	As the K -12 curriculum is designed including graduation requirements identified by sending LEA's, faculty will be provided professional development and on going support through the implementation process. Time Line: Immediate and ongoing Progress Check: January 2010	Professional Development is being provided on an ongoing basis.

		Non-Violent Crisis Intervention		
		Each month faculty host trainings and or activities related to their specific expertise. The month is devoted to presentations, games, contests and literature on a particular topic. Examples of the monthly learning opportunities include: • January – Physical Therapy • February – Nursing • March – Speech Therapy • April – Occupational Therapy • May – Education • June - Transition		
		Cornerstone School provides annually an Excellence in Education Award to a member of the staff identified by their peers.		
		Mentoring New teachers complete a training checklist which includes meeting with all faculty individually (teachers, physical therapist, speech therapist, nurse, nutritionist and occupational therapist) to complete required trainings. Additional training is provided by the administrative staff on agency policies and procedures.		
Performance	4	Partnerships The Cornerstone School has a number of partnerships supporting learning opportunities for faculty, parents, students and the community. The following are examples of some of the partnerships with the Cornerstone School.	Document Presentation Faculty Interviews	
		Higher Education New England Institute of Technology Quinnipiac University University of New Hampshire		

	University of Rhode Island Salve Regina University Rhode Island College Community College of Rhode Island State and Community Agencies Partnerships DCYF ORS MHRH DHS / DHS-EPSDT Tavares Educational Center RI Disability Law Center United Cerebral Palsy of RI Inc. Sherlock Center on Disabilities VNA Support Services Special Olympics RI About Families CEDARR Solutions CEDARR Interim Health Care Home Health Care Home Health Care YMCA TECH ACCESS Professional Associations and Organizations National Association the and RI Association for the Education of Young Children Association of RI Administrators of Special Education RI Association of Private Special Educational Schools RI Child Care Directors Association Council for Exceptional Children		
Performance 5	Instructional Strategies The Inclusive Early Childhood Program at Cornerstone School has just initiated The Creative Curriculum which is aligned to the RI Early Learning Standards. The Creative Curriculum is a framework which supports teacher	Document Presentation Faculty Interviews Classroom Observations	

planning to facilitate developmentally appropriate as well as individualized goals for young children. The framework of the curriculum focuses on five main components: how children develop and learn, the learning environment, what children learn the teacher's role and the family's role. Through this instructional strategy teachers are instructing children in ways that match how they develop and learn individually. The practice allows children to play in purposeful ways and to learn and practice new skills.

The Elementary through High School curriculum is an individualized adapted curriculum guided and aligned to the R I Alternate Assessment, however planning for an alternate academic achievement standards-based K-12 curriculum aligned to the Grade Level Expectations/Grade Span Expectations is just being discussed.

An additional instructional strategy is the News-2-you initiative, a dynamic interdisciplinary curriculum. The News-2-you curriculum is an internet newspaper which allows visual reading cues using the Mayer-Johnson Picture Communication Symbols and can be adapted for individual student's performance levels. There are three different levels which address vocabulary, multiple lesions that incorporate math, reading, cooking and games all around topical stories. In addition there is a speaking and Spanish version to the newspaper along with a list of targets towards standard-based instruction. Classrooms computers throughout the school are linked to the internet.

School Wide Instructional Strategies and Supports

- Standards based curriculum / Preschool only at this time
- Individualized Education Approach

Through the Cornerstone School Improvement process, school administrators and faculty will research K-12 curriculums addressing, alternate academic achievement standards, aligned to the RI Grade Level Expectations / Grade Span Expectations.

Additionally they will explore opportunities to align their K-12 curriculum with the Cranston School Department as appropriate.

For high school students attending Cornerstone School, administration and faculty will identify and incorporate in the student intake and or IEP process individual LEA Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements (PBGR), to align curriculum to address the various student pathways to graduation.

Time Line: Immediate and ongoing

Progress Check: January 2010

Graduation requirements/curriculum developments are underway. A Cornerstone team meets weekly and the team meets monthly with a rep. from Cranston public schools.

- Small classrooms with high staff to student ratio
 Multi-disciplinary team of licensed professionals
- to include social workers, speech therapists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, nutritionists and skilled nursing department
- Specialized nursing
- Assistive Technology Practitioner
- Experience in meeting significant cognitive and medical challenges
- Multi-sensory approach to learning
- Snoezelen room to address sensory needs
- Daily communication with families, local school departments and family support agencies
- Community activities including swimming at the YMCA, therapeutic horseback riding and participation in the Rhode Island Special Olympics
- Weekly music classes
- Internship site for Assisted Pet Therapy

Use Of Student Assessment And Performance Data To Inform Instructional Practices

The Cornerstone School faculty comprehensively reviews student data to evaluate and monitor student progress and performance outcomes. Evaluations include authentic assessments, performance data sheets, observations, interviews and check lists.

Common Planning Activities

All teachers meet bi-weekly with either the Director or the Early Childhood Coordinator. On a monthly basis one on one meetings are additionally scheduled for faculty with both the Director and or Early Childhood Coordinator to discuss classroom curriculum, assessments, classroom

		management and daily challenges. New teachers meet weekly with their respective supervisor and will be scheduled monthly depending on need. Overall school meetings to support students, parents and faculty include the following. • Monthly Staff Meetings • Teacher Classroom Meetings • Teacher Clinical Nursing Teacher Assistant Meetings • Early Childhood One on One Teacher Meetings • Early Childhood Monthly Meetings All meetings have specific agendas, minutes and action plans.		
Performance	6	Family Engagement The Cornerstone School has an active PTO comprised of school staff, parents (of both past and present) and students. The PTO meets every other month to plan for up coming school based activities, fund raising projects such as the "Chopstick Auction and Family Day" along with technical assistance activities for families of Cornerstone School. On going communication with families is provided through	Document Presentation Faculty and Parent Interviews	
		Daily logs/note books, the Daily News Sheet (Preschool), School / Classroom Assemblies and Home Visits. Home based therapies and services are coordinated by Cornerstone faculty and staff to assist families with needed equipment and supplies, nursing supports and assistive technology systems. Faculty attend with families' appointments and meetings to assist in the provision of appropriate services and supports in addition to equipment fittings, ordering and maintenance of all relevant student accommodations. Accessibility assessments are performed to assist with access		

opportunities within the home and community setting. In addition staff monitor and provide families with training to support appropriate and specific use of assistive technology devices (amplification systems) equipment (wheelchairs, walkers, beds, positioning equipment, standers, splints, strollers, adaptive toys and toileting equipment) and or therapies.

Faculty and staff at Cornerstone School additionally provide coordination of services and supports for families whose children are medically challenged through attendance with families at related medical appointments addressing evaluation out comes and provision of services and supports such as:

- Feeding clinics which address food aversions, tube feeding, failure to thrive and obesity concerns.
- Ordering and monitoring tube feedings with families and doctors along with medical equipment for the home.
- Coordination and communication of all relevant medical information for families, doctors and related services providers.

Consultations with child serving home based therapies are facilitated to manage and ensure consistency of individual student goals.

Cornerstone faculty and staff additionally coordinate and assist families with state and local agency supports and services such as:

- DHS/child care assistance applications
- Rite Care applications
- Coordinating services provision with CEDARR, Sherlock Center, CAITS Services, Bradley Hospital's Pedi-Partial program

 Service transitions and supports with the Division of Developmental Disabilities Assistance in developing request for afterschool programs such as HBTS and PASS Attendance at all student / team planning meetings with other agencies such as Hasbro Children's Hospital, CEDARR, Early Intervention Agencies and all sending LEAs. Provide information on community leisure activities such as horseback riding, Special Olympics, swimming, scouting organizations etc.
A parent survey is facilitated annually to identify school and family engagement ideas concerns and strategies.

Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	Program Continuum	Document		
			Faculty Interviews		
		The Cornerstone School is a year round educational	Classroom		
		setting (including ESY) which has the capacity to provide	Observations		
		specialized instruction for 101 student's ages 18 months to			
		21 years of age. The educational continuum provides			
		students with an academic program supported by a			
		multidisciplinary team providing therapeutic services and			
		supports to children with mental retardation, multiple and			
		physical disabilities, and developmental delays. The school			
		additionally has extensive experience in meeting the			
		significant cognitive and medical challenges of its student			
		population.			
		Services and supports for students with physical			
		impairments and or challenges include mobility training,			
		range of motion exploration and scoliosis monitoring. For			

students with medical challenges services and supports include respiratory treatments, mechanical ventilation monitoring, suctioning, seizure monitoring including use of vagal nerve stimulator, trach care, tube feeding and monitoring, tube reinserting, medical provision and monitoring along with all relevant nursing provision and emergency planning.

Inclusive Early Childhood Program

The Inclusion Early Childhood Program at Cornerstone School is for student's ages 18 months through Kindergarten. All classrooms are fully inclusive, developmentally appropriate, with high staff to student ratios providing positive guidance techniques supported by the Creative Curriculum.

There is one Integrated Toddler Class for children 18 months to 3 years of age, supported by a teacher and two teacher assistants currently providing instruction and support for nine students.

There are three Integrated Preschool Classes supported by a general educator in each class, two teacher assistants and one special educator who floats from class to class. Each class has a split population of typically developing peers along with students with special needs.

There is one full day Inclusion Kindergarten class supported by co-teachers (general/special educators) and a teacher assistant currently providing instruction and support for 7 students, 2 of which are typically developing peers. Cornerstone School is in the process of developing a plan to draw typically developing peers for the September 2009 – 2010 school year.

There are two Elementary Level Classes, one Middle Level Class, and two High School Classes. Each classroom is a

		personalized environment supported by a special educator and two instructional assistants providing an individualized adapted curriculum guided and aligned to the R I Alternate Assessment. Cornerstone School in Partnership with the Cranston School Department initiated in 2007/08 school year a joint transition program/class. This program provided Cranston students ages 14 through 21 a vocational transitional planning experience based on their individual needs. Student rotate through their academic program which is school based within the LEA and receive their specialized transition instruction, services and supports through the Cornerstone School. (detail of the services and supports noted in the transition section of this report) All students attending Cornerstone School have opportunities to participate with typically developing peers in the community. Cornerstone School students have participated with students attending Cranston Area Career & Technical Center in building a Gingerbread House and a storage shed for equipment.		
Performance	2	School Removals and Disciplinary Policies The Cornerstone School has clear policies and practices that address student behavior within the whole school community. Additionally the school will ensure that alternative programming is available to students when disciplinary action is required.	Document Presentation Faculty Interviews	
Performance	3	Social Emotional Resources and Positive Behavioral Interventions And Supports The Cornerstone School offers students a number of social emotional behavioral interventions and supports. A support program has been established by the school social worker	Document Presentation Faculty Interviews Classroom Observations	

		to collect data from teachers and families along with student observations to identify student social emotional behavioral issues. Through this process intervention strategies are developed along with behavior intervention plan for students. In addition a clinical social worker is available as need to further address student's needs. A non-violence curriculum "Second Step" is utilized to support all students social emotional learning through the use of role playing with puppets, case vignettes, pictures and discussion questions along with social stories. Additionally some classrooms have a safe space for students to go to if they feel overwhelmed, upset, or simply need time alone to calm down. As appropriate FBA activities are facilitated in understanding problem behaviors by examining the specifics of behavior and developing appropriate and effective intervention plans. Faculty are trained in Non-violent Crisis Interventions along with Positive Guidance Techniques Whole school community social activities include but are not limited to the following Car Wash – Fund raising twice a year Field Trips - Scavenger Hunt "Find the Pot of Goal" Haunted Maze		
Performance	4	Facilities The Cornerstone School is fully accessible with appropriately posted evacuation plans throughout the school setting. Emergency response is managed and facilitated through the use of loud speakers, walkie talkies, assignments to aid emergency exiting, each room has a	Document Faculty Interviews Classroom Observations	

primary and secondary exit, each student is assigned appropriate staff to support exiting along with lock down along with nursing support. In addition policies and procedures are documented in regards to the modules
outside the school building for exiting have been established.

Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
		The Cornerstone School will continue to assist the respective LEAs, that they work with in providing a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to the students they serve in accordance and adherence to the RI Regulations. This is applicable to all items in this section in addition to the record review addendum.		Assurances will be provided to the RI Department of Education, Office For Diverse Learners that compliance issues are addressed and rectified. This Support Plan is applicable for all compliance findings noted through the record review process.	
Performance	1	Evaluation Procedures And Protocols Cornerstone School has developed clear protocols and procedures to plan for student individual education plans along with evaluations/re-evaluations as appropriate. During this first and third quarter of school a progress report is sent to parents and parents can contact the school for conferences regarding student needs at any time. IEP meetings/reviews are held twice a year during the second and forth quarter of the school year. During this time parents, general and special educators and the sending LEA review and address student present level of performance, individual considerations for evaluations/re-evaluations along with next steps planning. A student binder is managed to collect all relevant data for	Document Presentation Faculty Interviews Record Review		

		instruction needs as appropriate.			
Compliance	2	Record Review Themes There were some individual IEP items that were not documented in the IEPs. Areas included considerations, duration and location of services, present levels of functional performance, frequency and supplementary aids and services, accommodations and transition documentation. (RI Regulations Subpart D Evaluations, Eligibility Determinations, Individualized Education Programs and Educational Placements) Alternate Assessment / Check List (Participation Criteria for the Rhode Island Alternate Assessment System (RIAA)) not in central file and or attached to student IEP (§300.320)	Document Presentation Faculty Interviews Record Reviews	Cornerstone School administration will create a check list to assure relevant information regarding student planning is collected from the appropriate agencies, schools and families and will monitored as students continue in the program. Professional development will be provided for faculty in May 2009. Time Line: Immediate and ongoing Progress Check: October 2009	Checklist created and professional development provided
	3	Cornerstone School facilitates an Extended School Year program for eligible students determined by their IEP team. Educational therapeutic services goals are planed for to meet and or maintain current levels of performance through the summer months. In addition the school supports community activities during the program include swimming, horseback riding, sailing and bowling.	Document Presentation Faculty Interviews Record Review		

4. TRANSITION					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	The Cornerstone School maintains a comprehensive	Document		
		transition policy which addresses both Early Childhood	Presentation		
		and Secondary Transitions.	Faculty		
			Interviews		
		Early Childhood Program Transitions	Classroom		
			Observation		
		A variety of transition activities take place to individualize	Record Review		

student planning. The transition focus would address either internal transitions (class to class/level) and or external transitions (another educational setting).

Internal Transitions are planned for by the current and receiving educational teams along with parents to discuss student's current level of performance assessment outcomes, strengths and needs, interest along instructional strategies that are successful to plan efficiently. Students are transitioned with the time necessary for family visits and discussions with the receiving team.

External Transitions are planned for when a student is exiting the program to attend another educational setting. The Cornerstone School class/level team provide to the receiving educational setting a comprehensive portfolio of the students developmental level, strengths and needs. The school staff accompanies the family to all relevant meetings including site visits, teaming and eligibility meetings and provides transitional support to that student as needed follow-up and after care.

Secondary Transition Planning

The Transition Program

The purpose of the transition program is to provide students the means to self-determine his/her future in preparation to achieve successful transitions throughout the school-age years and ultimately to an adult living situation

Transition planning is initiated for each student who is 14 years of age. Cornerstone school facilitates a comprehensive transition timeline for individualizing transition planning for each student. All transition activities

and planning are aligned to student age and student transition assessment outcomes and are incorporated into the student's individual education plan. All Transition planning takes place through a Multidisciplinary Team process including all related service providers and agencies along with the family and student as appropriate.

Family Transition Planning

The initial discussion occurs with the school social worker presenting an overview of the transition program and IEP document with the family and then re-introduced at the IEP meeting for continued planning. The Family is provided with "Here's To Your Future": A Parents Guide to Transition Planning at the IEP meeting along with a Home School Journal to initiate the transition concept with both the student and parents. Continued planning is addressed with the family such as Guardianship, SSI changes, DDD contact, tours of Adult Programs, applying to ORS, along with placement determination and follow up.

Student Transition Planning

The Transition Assessment process for students participating in this program includes the collection of data which is synthesized to individually plan appropriate programs for students. The following data areas are compiled to inform as a holistic approach to transition planning;

- Academics/Achievement (reading, math, writing and language)
- Aptitudes (verbal, numerical, gross/fine motor, eye-hand coordination, size discrimination and form perception)
- Career Interest (expressed, demonstrated and tested)
- Behavioral / Social (interpersonal relations, responsibility, confidence and communication

 skills) Medical (general health, vision, hearing, seizures, speech and language) Work Skills (situational assessment, work site in school, vocational education classes, community work study, career exploration, competitive employment and supported employment) Learning Styles (following instructions, retention of instructions, attention span, improvement of performance with repetition and organization abilities) 	
Transition Services	
 Individual transition planning for students ages 14-21 Community based activities and assessments Daily activities to include shopping, leisure, volunteer and work experiences Full and part time opportunities Vocational development in include job exploration, job shadowing, interviewing skills, resume and portfolio development Activities of daily living to include self care skills, household chores, cooking, shopping etc. Formal vocational evaluations and interest inventories completed by trained staff and provided to local school districts and the Office of Rehabilitative Services Assistance given to families with the transition process 	
Transition Assessments	
 Ten Sigma Pre-Vocational Skill Assessment Functional Skills Assessment Employability / Life Skills Assessment 	

		Cornerstone School in Partnership with the Cranston School Department initiated in 2007/08 school year a joint transition program. This program provides Cranston students ages 14 through 21 a vocational transitional planning experience based on their individual needs in community settings. Job / Internships Placements Crown Plaza Better Shred K-Mart Time Around Sports Cranston YMCA Cornerstone School Eleanor Slater Hospital			
		Yesteryears CaféBotanical GardensComstock Industries			
		ORS contracts with Cornerstone to facilitate vocational assessments.			
Performance	2	Secondary Post Secondary Planning	Document Faculty		
		Each student at Cornerstone School is provided a Summary of Performance for post secondary planning.	Interviews Record Review		
Performance	3	Though the Cornerstone School addresses the Transfer of Rights through the IEP process formal documentation has not been established for determination of educational rights. (RI age of majority is 18) Transfer of Rights (§300.520, §300.320)	Document Faculty Interviews Record Review	Cornerstone School administration will create a check list to assure relevant information regarding student planning is collected from the appropriate agencies, schools and families and will be monitored as students continue in the program. Professional	Checklist created and professional development provided

				development will be provided for faculty in May 2009. Time Line: Immediate and ongoing Progress Check: October 2009	
Performance	4	Though the Cornerstone School provides students ages 14 through 21 a pithier of vocational and transition experiences, along with daily living and residence exploration, curriculum alignment from sending LEAs to support individual LEA Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements (PBGRs)and to additionally address student Pathways to graduation has not been established.	Document Faculty Interviews Record Review	Cornerstone School administration and faculty will work in conjunction with sending LEA's to address curriculum alignment and district criteria for determining individualized Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements and the various pathways toward graduation for students attending the high school program. Time Line: Immediate and ongoing Progress Check: January 2010	Graduation requirements/curriculum developments are underway. A Cornerstone team meets weekly and the team meets monthly with a rep. from Cranston public schools.